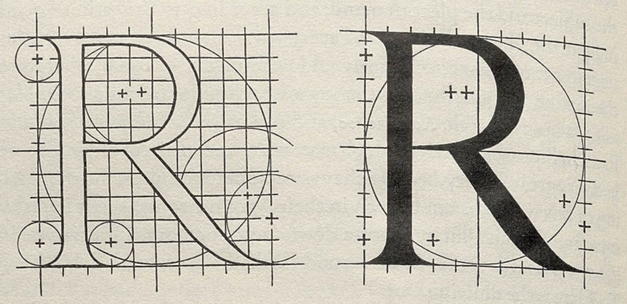
with a line beneath, which signifies that, after the perfectness which the O denotes by virtue of its circular form, and the idea of prosperity denoted by the P following the O, those who persevere in well-made letters add a tail to their knowledge over and above its perfection; that is to say, they acquire worldly goods by their virtue, which the V, the first letter of the word Virtue, signifies covertly, as they can judge who know these things by dint of careful study.



THE letter R here drawn, and made from I & O, is of equal breadth and height, and to be duly made, requires seven centres, which I have marked where the point of the compass must be placed.

R, according to Martianus Capella, *in spiritum lingua crispante corraditur.* R is pronounced with the tongue making a strident and vibrating sound through the open lips. When dogs are angry, before they begin to bite each other, contracting their throats and grinding their teeth, they seem to be saying R, for which reason the poet Persius, the most pleasant of caustic satirists, calls it *Litera canina,* the canine letter, which the dogs utter, when he says in his first Satire:

Sonat hic de nare canina littera.*

* *Verse* 109.

That is to say, 'The canine letter here sounds from the nostril.' When a man is angry, or vexed, or wroth, we say that he is irritated by some affront, that is to say, exasperated (*exaspere*), & this because he cannot utter a soft word, but only harsh (*aspre*) and angry sounds made up of strident letters, which letters are RR repeated and pronounced in a

harsh tone (*asprement*). And to avoid this unpleasant asperity, the ancient Latins very often wrote and pronounced S instead of R, in such names as *Valerius* and *Furius,* saying *Valesius* and *Fusius.* Quintilian bears witness to this in the first book of his *Institutiones Oratoriæ,* when he says: *Sed et quæ rectis quoque casibus ætate transierunt. Nam vt Valesij et Fusij in Valerios Furiosque venerunt. Ita Arbos, Labos, Vapos, etiam Clamos ætatis fuerunt.** Festus likewise bears witness to it, saying: S, *quoque pro* R *sæpe antiqui posuerunt, vt Maiosibus, Meliosibus, Lasibus, Fesijs, pro Maioribus, Melioribus, Laribus, Ferijs.*† Which manner of pronunciation is to-day wrongly used, not only in Bourges, where I was born, but in this noble city of Paris, where very often S is said for R, & R for S. For, instead of saying *Iesus Maria,* they say *Ierus Masia;* and instead of saying at the beginning of the first book of Virgil's *Æneid,*

Musa mihi causas memora quo numine læso,‡

they say, wrongly,

Mura mihi cauras memosa quo numine læro.

* I, IV, 13.

† *Book* 16, *line* 1.

‡ I, 8.

I do not say this to reproach them, for there are some who pronounce very well; but I say it to admonish those who take neither pains nor pleasure in pronouncing well.

I Find furthermore three other peoples that pronounce R very ill: those of Le Mans, the Bretons, and the Lorrainers. The people of Le Mans add S to R; for if they would say, *Pater Noster,* or *Tu es magister noster,* they say *Paters Nosters,* or *Tu es magisters nosters.* The Bretons pronounce only one R where two are written; as in saying *Homo curit* for *Homo currit.* On the contrary, the Lorrainers pronounce two where there is but one; for when they wish to say, 'Saincte Marie, vecy grande mocquerie et dure dyablerie,' they pronounce it, 'Saincte Marrie, vecy grande mocquerrie et durre dyablerrie.' It is the Lorrainers against whom Proverb seven hundred and fifty-three of the second Chiliad of Erasmus can be quoted, where we read, *Eretriensium Rho,* & not against the Picards, as Erasmus wrote in that passage; and I am amazed that he fell into that error, since he is so learned, and that he did not know that the Picards pronounce R much better than the Lorrainers do; and also that he did not know that there is no nation in France which pronounces better than the said Picards. It may be that he thought that Picards and Lorrainers, because they both speak French, are all of the same nation.

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